



ENDING VETERAN HOMELESSNESS

*Jim, formerly homeless Veteran
Served 2004-2011*

About the Initiative

The United States Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) is, and will continue to be, committed to the goal of ending Veteran homelessness. VA began a coordinated and focused effort to end Veteran homelessness in 2010, and since that time the number of Veterans experiencing homelessness has declined by 47 percent. According to one of the key measures of homelessness, the Department of Housing and Urban Development's Point-in-Time Count, it is estimated that on a single night in January 2016, fewer than 40,000 Veterans were homeless and roughly 13,000 were unsheltered or on the street.

Despite this significant progress, one homeless Veteran is too many. We know that no single agency can do it alone, but working together with Federal, state, and local governments – and most importantly with local communities – we can and will end Veteran homelessness.

The services are here.

The continuum of VA homeless programs constitutes the largest integrated network of homeless assistance programs in the country. We work directly with communities to help them develop creative and tailored solutions that work best for them and their local Veterans. Through this collaborative approach, many communities have achieved an effective end to Veteran homelessness by putting in place a comprehensive response that ensures homelessness is prevented whenever possible, or is otherwise a rare, brief, and non-recurring experience.

A phone call away.

If a Veteran you know is homeless or at imminent risk of becoming homeless, refer him or her to their local VA medical center where staff is ready to assist, or urge them to call **1-877-4AID-VET (1-877-424-3838)**. Trained, supportive professionals are available 24 hours a day, seven days a week, to connect Veterans with the care they need to get back on their feet.



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VA uses individualized, comprehensive services to help Veterans obtain:

- **Health care:** High-quality health care is central to VA's approach to reducing homelessness among Veterans. VA programs such as [Health Care for Homeless Veterans](#) provide outreach, case management, and residential services to ensure that chronically homeless Veterans – especially those with serious mental health diagnoses and/or substance use disorders – can be placed in quality housing and receive the services that best meet their specialized needs.
- **Housing/supportive services:** VA helps eligible homeless Veterans access safe, affordable housing while providing case management and supportive services. This approach is known as the Housing First model of care, an evidence-based practice model that prioritizes getting Veterans into stable housing first, and then providing wraparound supportive care tailored to their individual needs. Veterans who enter Housing First programs have been shown to have reduced emergency room care utilization, reduced health care costs, improved health outcomes and much better long term housing success.
- **Income/employment/benefits:** Stable employment affords Veterans the opportunity to return to healthy, productive lifestyles within their own communities. In 2014, VA created the [Homeless Veterans Community Employment Services](#) program to make it easier than ever for business and industry to find, interview, and hire job-ready Veterans exiting homelessness. VA also provides [job training](#) through a network of vocational rehabilitation specialists that help more than 40,000 Veterans a year.
- **Education:** VA provides benefits coaching and personalized support services that can help Veterans return to school to prepare for, obtain and maintain stable careers.
- VA provides a range of additional services and programs aimed at preventing and ending homelessness among Veterans including: [case management services](#), mental health and [substance misuse treatment](#), [community outreach resources](#) and [support for justice-involved Veterans](#).

Together, we can help.

We can all do something to end Veteran homelessness. Spread the word to let Veterans know that a single call can connect them with the services they have earned.

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